




THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

JOY PEACE HOPE LOVE



Christmas
is coming...



Christmas is about sharing and
forgiving, about loving and spreading
joy. The best way to enjoy Christmas
is to adopt the spirit of the occasion
and be Christmas yourself. Be the one
to spread joy and light everywhere!

WishAFriend.com



**FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN, TO US A SON IS GIVEN, AND THE GOVERNMENT
WILL BE ON HIS SHOULDERS. AND HE WILL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE – Isaiah 19:6**

WHY IS CHRISTMAS CELEBRATED ON 25 DECEMBER?

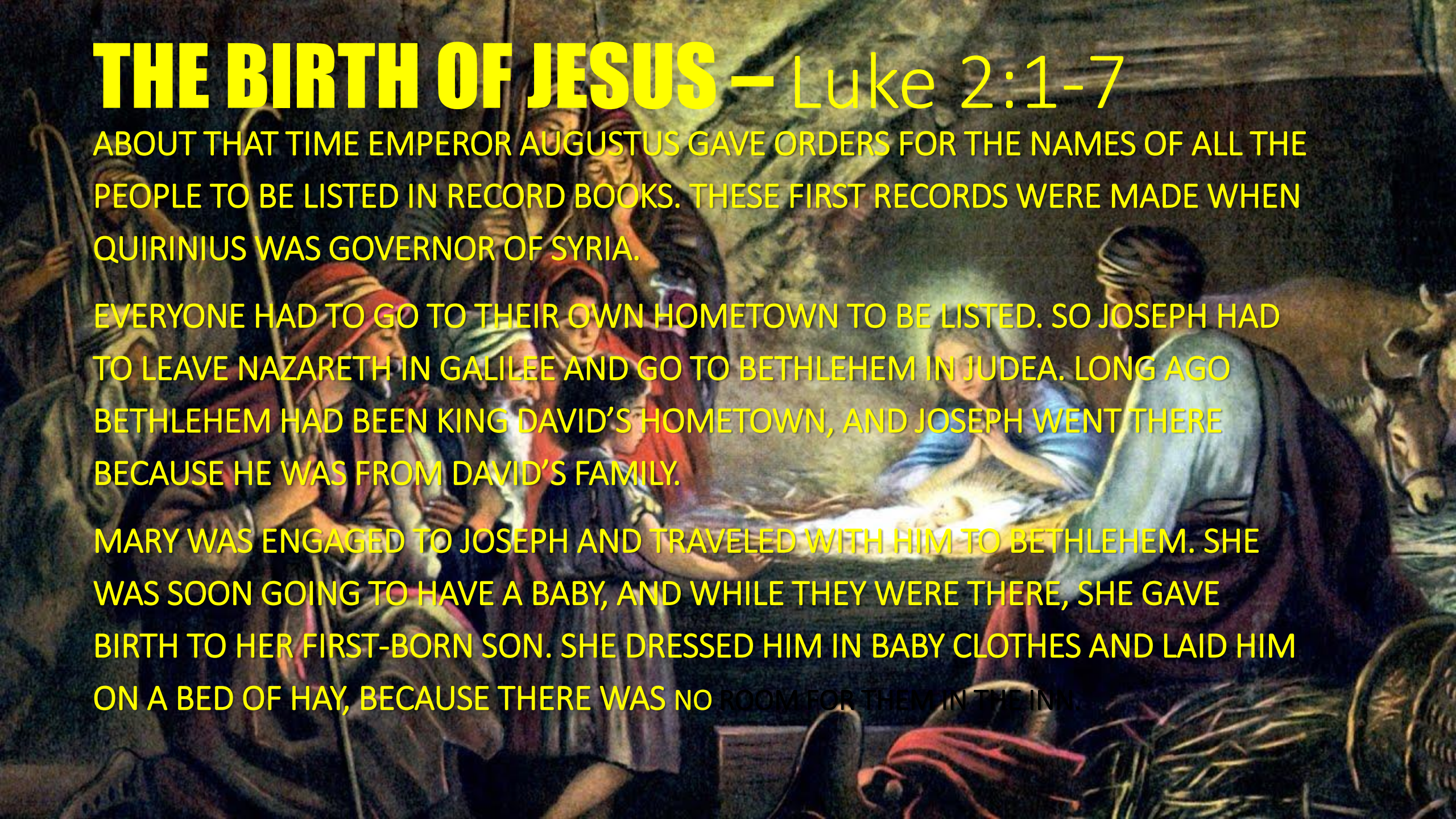
The name 'Christmas' comes from the Mass of Christ (or Jesus). a Mass service (which is sometimes called Communion or Eucharist) is where Christians remember that Jesus died for us and then came back to life. The 'Christ-Mass' service was the only one that was allowed to take place after sunset (and before sunrise the next day), so people had it at midnight! so we get the name Christ-Mass, shortened to Christmas.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS — Luke 2:1-7

ABOUT THAT TIME EMPEROR AUGUSTUS GAVE ORDERS FOR THE NAMES OF ALL THE PEOPLE TO BE LISTED IN RECORD BOOKS. THESE FIRST RECORDS WERE MADE WHEN QUIRINIUS WAS GOVERNOR OF SYRIA.

EVERYONE HAD TO GO TO THEIR OWN HOMETOWN TO BE LISTED. SO JOSEPH HAD TO LEAVE NAZARETH IN GALILEE AND GO TO BETHLEHEM IN JUDEA. LONG AGO BETHLEHEM HAD BEEN KING DAVID'S HOMETOWN, AND JOSEPH WENT THERE BECAUSE HE WAS FROM DAVID'S FAMILY.

MARY WAS ENGAGED TO JOSEPH AND TRAVELED WITH HIM TO BETHLEHEM. SHE WAS SOON GOING TO HAVE A BABY, AND WHILE THEY WERE THERE, SHE GAVE BIRTH TO HER FIRST-BORN SON. SHE DRESSED HIM IN BABY CLOTHES AND LAID HIM ON A BED OF HAY, BECAUSE THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN.



CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS

Discuss these questions as a class

- Is Christmas only for Christians – why?
- How important do you think the Christmas story about the birth of Jesus is when thinking about Christmas?
- Who were the 3 Wise Men?
- Is Christmas about giving – how do the 3 Wise Men show this?
- How will you and your family celebrate Christmas this year?

THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS – JOSEPH OGBONNA

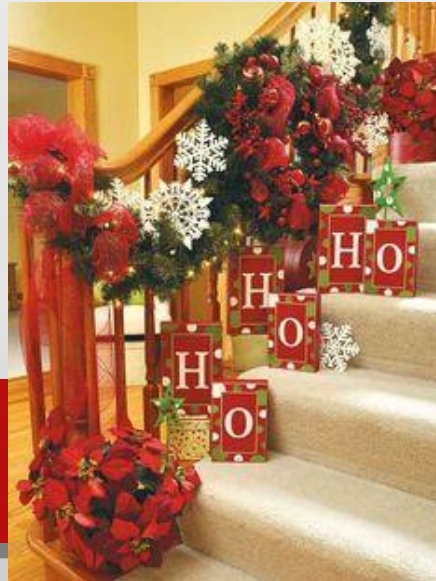
**OH WHAT A PLEASANT DAY TO BEHOLD!
A GLORIOUS EVENING IN DECEMBER,
A DAY WE ARE SURE TO REMEMBER
THE NOSTALGIC HAPPY DAYS OF OLD.**

**OH WHAT BEAUTIFUL MOMENTS UNFOLD!
THE GLADDENED CAROL VOICES RAISED,
SANTA'S DELIGHTS, CANDLE LIGHTS OF GOLD,
AND RELIVED MOMENTS HARDLY ERASED.**

**OH WHAT MOMENTOUS DELIGHTS ABOUND!
THE MERRIMENT FROM HEARTS WELL LADEN WITH JOY,
CHILDREN GETTING AMUSED WITH EACH NEW TOY,
THUS RESTORING BLISS ONCE LOST BUT FOUND.**



What are your favourite things about Christmas?



BUT IS IT ALL JOY? – COVID19!

THE OLD CHRISTMAS SONG SAYS, "IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR." YET FOR MANY, CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON TO SURVIVE. DEPRESSION, GRIEF AND LONELINESS ARE OFTEN EXACERBATED BY SHATTERED FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INCREASED DEBT LOADS.

THIS WILL BE INCREASINGLY TRUE THIS YEAR DURING THE COVID19 CRISIS!

THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS – DISCUSS THEM AS A CLASS

- 1. How can you try to overcome some of the problems Covid19 will cause this Christmas?**
- 2. How can you help people worse off than you this Christmas?**
- 3. How can you help make the coming holiday time a good experience for you and your family?**
- 4. What will you do to help at home this Christmas time**



PEACE AT CHRISTMAS

- in the last few decades, two million people have been killed in war in Afghanistan. The war in Afghanistan was the longest in our own nation's history, but you don't hear much about it and folks don't seem that concerned. War is normal, permanent, institutionalized, taken for granted. In 2016, the U.S. launched over 330 drone attacks in Afghanistan, and over 1700 Afghan children have been killed or harmed in the conflict. We deliberately, systematically, intentionally wage war, kill children, and pursue "war on earth."
- The message of Christmas is "peace on earth," so we should try to welcome that great Christmas gift of peace. We should join to renounce violence, join the global peace movement and spend our lives making peace with everyone.
- Christmas invites us to reclaim our common imagination for peace, to herald a new future of peace, and so to resist the old paradigm of global war-making.

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS

*Gracious God,
We turn to you in wonder and praise as
we celebrate Christmas.*

*Remind us during this sacred season of our
collective story. May our roots extend deep
into the soil of faith and spread outwards to
share the Good News of Christ's coming.*

*Focus our attention so that we remain
attuned to the sights, sounds, and sensations
of the season. May the presence of Christ be
at the forefront of our thoughts and actions
as we enact each holiday ritual.*

*Fill us with hope in the continuous birthing of
Christ in our world. May we never lose sight
of the promise of the Kingdom of peace and
compassion that is both present and yet to be.*

With gratitude in our hearts, we pray.

Amen.

HOPE AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a time for hope and joy to triumph over adversity. "Across the world people are fleeing persecution in record numbers, in Syria and Iraq, in the South Sudan and across Europe where more than three quarters of a million people are seeking refuge as winter sets in."

It is also a time for us to hope that the Covid19 vaccination will help us to return to a bit of normality in 2021



LOVE CAME DOWN AT CHRISTMAS

FAMILIES MATTER

My grandmother died a week and a half away from her favorite holiday (Christmas) and we thought that things were at their worst. We were eating in complete silence and all of a sudden my grandfather said the simplest thing: that he was grateful for us being there. That week was the hardest week of my life and I still remember it vividly, but that Christmas when my Grandpa said those words I thought that things could go back to normal.

HELP THE HOMELESS

All throughout my childhood there was a homeless man who slept in our local Laundrette. Every Christmas my mum would cook a big spread and we would take him a heaping plate and I insisted on hugging him. It is one of my favorite memories, and probably one of the reasons I ended up in school studying for social work.

The Orange

When I was 6 years old or so I received an orange from my great-grandmother. I didn't understand why someone had given me fruit for Christmas, until I learned many years later that this was my great-grandma's favorite gift when she was a kid in the 1910s... It was her tradition and her way to remind us that small things could make us happy.



The story of the Magi (The 3 Wisemen) can be found in the New Testament – The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 2.

JOY PEACE HOPE LOVE

As a class discuss these 4 words:

JOY – what are the most exciting things about Christmas?

PEACE – is this about world peace or personal peace?

HOPE – What are you hoping for this Christmas?

LOVE – How will you show love over the Christmas holidays?

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

How do they celebrate Christmas in Bolivia?

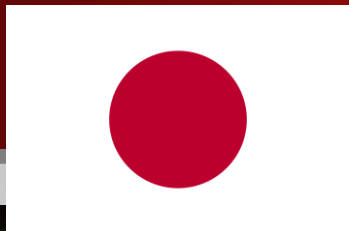
Christmas in Bolivia. In Bolivia, Christmas is celebrated from Christmas Eve until Epiphany (6th January). Most of the population of Bolivia is Catholic and many people go to a Midnight Mass service on Christmas Eve called the 'Misa de Gallo' (Mass of the rooster). At Midnight people like to let off fire-crackers!

CHRISTMAS IN JAPAN

Although Christmas is not a formal, nationally recognized holiday in Japan, the Japanese culture has adopted the season's traditions and spirit over time. Cities celebrate Christmas through festivals and special events, and citizens celebrate the season with sentiment, presents and, of course, food

How Christmas is celebrated in Malawi.

Christmas trees are common in Malawi. Most Malawians do not have the financial resources for an UK-style Christmas, full of gifts and family and feasting. A typical Christmas meal for a Malawian family is not far from their everyday fare, they might have rice instead and chicken. While most Malawians have a family meal at home, the lake is a popular holiday destination for those with resources. Generally speaking, Christmas in Malawi doesn't seem to be as big a deal as in the UK. A student from a college in Malawi told me he wasn't even going home because he had a lot of studying to do. Not bothering with the 4-hour bus trip home? Skipping Christmas to STUDY?



Christmas quiz questions

1. Astronauts broadcast which Christmas song from space in 1965?
2. Doing which Christmas activity sends roughly 14,700 American to A and E every year?
3. What Christmas decoration was originally made from strands of silver?
4. Who played Scrooge in 'The Muppet Christmas Carol'?
5. Donald Trump makes a cameo appearance in which Christmas film?
6. In Christmas carol the 12 days of Christmas, what gift is offered on the seventh day?
7. Name the Youtube personality who won consecutive UK Christmas number 1s in 2018 and 2019.
8. Which Christmas beverage is also known as 'Milk Punch'?
9. What's the name of the main villain in The Nightmare Before Christmas?
10. Which royal first delivered the Royal Christmas Message?
11. What does Noel mean in Latin?
12. The custom of erecting a Christmas tree originated from which country?
13. Swedes traditionally celebrate Christmas Eve by watching which famous cartoon?
14. Which pop song has won the Christmas Singles Chart Number One twice?
15. And finally, in 2020 Prime Minister Boris Johnson described Christmas as the season to be jolly and...?

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

- **THE FIRST 3 FORMS TO EMAIL ME THE CORRECT ANSWERS TO THIS CHRISTMAS QUIZ WILL WIN PRIZES**
- **EMAIL - tdobbs@chacademy.co.uk**

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head:
'There is no peace on earth, ' I said
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.'

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

A CHRISTMAS POEM FOR REFLECTION

I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY BY HENRY LONGFELLOW

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
and a
happy new year**